



STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

P.O. BOX 83720
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TOM LUNA
STATE SUPERINTENDENT
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

ISAT Sample Questions: Grade 10 Language Usage

1. Arturo is writing an essay about Idaho's program to retrofit, or modify, school buses.

Read his outline.

I. The Diesel Retrofit Program

- A. The program is part of Clean Air Zone Idaho.
- B. Its goal is to improve air quality.
- C. The program will reduce students' exposure to bus emissions.

II. Reasons to retrofit school buses

- A. Buses can remain in use for many years.
- B. Older buses were built when emissions standards were different.
- C. Federal grants can be used to pay for the upgrades.

Choose the **best** thesis statement for Arturo's essay.

- A. One idea for improving air quality is for more students to ride school buses.
 - B. Basin School District in Idaho City is the first Clean School Bus project in the state.
 - C. Retrofitting old school buses is just one way to reduce air pollution from vehicle emissions.
 - D. School buses should be retrofitted to reduce the amount of pollution that is emitted into the air.
2. Read the topic sentence.

Whales use sound to navigate, hunt, and communicate.

Which detail **best** supports the topic sentence?

- A. Killer whales travel in large groups or pods.
- B. How whales determine their location is still a mystery.
- C. For instance, humpback whales are found in oceans throughout the world.
- D. For example, blue whales have a special song they use to identify each other.



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3. Read the paragraph.

Boise was given its name when French-Canadian trappers first explored the area after crossing the arid desert plains. Finding green trees, primarily cottonwoods along the river, the trappers named the site Boise (meaning “wooded”). Boise has consequently been given the nickname *City of Trees*.

The paragraph was **most likely** written to

- A. inform.
- B. persuade.
- C. define.
- D. analyze.

4. Read the paragraph.

(1) In 1960, water power accounted for 40% of America’s electricity. (2) Four decades later, dams provide less than 20% of the nation’s electric power. (3) For now, coal and natural gas rank highest as sources of electric energy. (4) Experts predict that within the next decade, water-produced electricity will make up less than 10% of the nation’s total electrical output.

What statement **best** describes Sentence 4?

- A. It should be written as two sentences.
- B. It should be placed after Sentence 1.
- C. It should be placed after Sentence 2.
- D. It does not belong in the paragraph.



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5. Read the paragraph.

(1) You may know that people used to think Earth was flat, but did you know that they also used to think the Sun and the planets revolved around Earth? (2) Nicolaus Copernicus made the controversial assertion that the solar system is heliocentric. (3) In a heliocentric model, the Sun is at the center of the solar system. (4) Copernicus was correct in his assertion. (5) With it, he changed science and developed the field of modern astronomy.

Choose the **best** detail to add after Sentence 3.

- A. Copernicus was not the first person to think that Earth revolves around the Sun.
- B. Copernicus was a mathematician, diplomat, physician, and many other things, in addition to a scientist.
- C. Copernicus's study of astronomy was merely a hobby; he never worked professionally as an astronomer.
- D. Copernicus developed this assertion in his book, *On the Revolutions of the Celestial Spheres*.

6. Read the sentences.

(1) Catherine arrived with Lydia at half past eight. (2) _____, it was clear that the surprise party was indeed a surprise.

Choose the **best** transition to begin Sentence 2.

- A. Judging by the look on her face
- B. Due to the nature of the event
- C. Asking Lydia to wait outside
- D. With Catherine's cooperation

7. Which sentence shows the correct placement of the underlined modifier?

- A. He ate only the green beans and left the rest of the vegetables on his plate.
- B. She watched her grandfather as he tied the knot in his tie in the mirror.



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- C. He was looking for a woman sitting at the counter wearing a red scarf.
- D. She almost answered every question correctly on the final exam.

8. Which sentence contains a spelling error?

- A. Your recommendation turned out to be an excellent alternative.
- B. His assignment was to analyze the impact of the trade agreement.
- C. Winning the state championship is now a possability for our team.
- D. The mushrooms could have been contaminated before they were purchased.

9. Read the sentences.

My friend Casey has many talents. He is known for his ability to do woodworking, his superior skills on the basketball court, and good grades.

Choose the **best** substitute for the underlined words.

- A. his success in the classroom
- B. bringing home excellent marks
- C. being a student who is a scholar
- D. what he does well in the classroom

10. Which underlined verb creates an error in subject-verb agreement?

- A. A cook stove and sleeping bag is needed for Marco's upcoming camping adventure.
- B. The reasons Shantelle is unable to go to the hockey game are too many to count.
- C. After the long campaign, it looks like either Ana or Liz is going to be class president.
- D. Both of Grant's dogs are active and jump all over you when you walk in the door.

11. Which sentence has an error in colon usage?

- A. Humans need three basic elements to survive: food, air, and water.
- B. A good pair of work boots should have the following: leather soles, waterproof lining, and deep arch supports.



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- C. Gradually add these ingredients to the batter: sifted flour, baking soda, and salt.
- D. Some famous American explorers are: Daniel Boone, Richard Byrd, Jonathan Carver, and Meriwether Lewis.

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Key

| Question # | Correct Answer | Standard/Goal/Objective |
|------------|----------------|-------------------------|
| 1 | D | 3.1.2 |
| 2 | D | 3.1.3 |
| 3 | A | 3.1.4 |
| 4 | C | 3.3.1 |
| 5 | D | 3.3.2 |
| 6 | A | 3.3.3 |
| 7 | A | 3.3.4 |
| 8 | C | 3.4.2 |
| 9 | A | 5.3.2 |
| 10 | A | 5.4.1 |
| 11 | D | 5.4.2 |